

Paver Lights Bring Foliage Via Light

by Matthew Doyle, Assistant Editor

The Anaheim GardenWalk is a shopping center in the California Resort District in Anaheim, California, adjacent to Disneyland. The high profile nature of the job and desire of the client to avoid a traditional retail experience meant only a unique hardscape would do. Paver lights provided just that.

The creative team assembled to tackle the challenge included designing landscape architect Bennett + Mitchell, landscape architect of record ima+design, lighting designers Kyllene Jones (IALD, IES, Principal) and Kristin Pickar (LEED AP, IES, Designer) of Lighting Design Alliance, design architect Callison, and architect of record Lyons Warren.

An organic garden theme was ultimately chosen. The challenge then became how to integrate the hardscape into that theme. The dreaded “runway effect” had to be avoided at all costs, as it would be particularly incompatible with the rest of the landscape.

Left: According to Greg Davis, the Anaheim GardenWalk’s Assistant Marketing Director, “...we sought to get beyond traditional retail and establish an ambience that would encourage clients to return often.” A garden design theme was deemed the solution, requiring a unique approach to the hardscapes; paver lights fit the bill.

IMAGE AND QUOTE COURTESY OF LIGHTWILD

Paver Light Solution

The shopping center is segmented into three courtyards connected by walkways. While paver lights can be found throughout the walkways, this is only true of the larger “Gala Garden” courtyard. The area is a key component to the facility, serving an additional entertainment function with the ability to set up a temporary stage. It also demonstrates the effectiveness of the paver lights in the hardscapes particularly well.

A primary element in the luminaries’ effectiveness according to the design team was the random pattern in which they were laid.

This was intended to replicate petals or other natural foliage strewn across the ground. Said Kristin Pickar of Lighting Design Alliance, “...we wanted to bring across the concept of foliage through light.” The team had to do this while working with the paver intersections and spiral pattern of the hardscape.

Several features of the LightWild tiles specified also served the organic theme of the design according to the same source. The trimless, in-grade nature of the fixtures created the appearance of natural points of color strewn about the ground, as opposed to synthetic lights buried in the natural stone.

The final light show selected for the installation was another major element in integrating the hardscape into the overall theme according to the team. All colors chosen were aimed at replicating nature and furthering the falling petal effect. As a result, browns or any other colors not typically found in flower pedals were rejected.

The pacing selected for the color changes in the Gala Garden is noticeably slower than that chosen for the walkways. This not only furthers the falling petal effect, but is also designed to work with the intended purpose of the space according to the design team. Patrons are thus inspired to relax and linger in the courtyard while enjoying the light show.

Design Challenges During Installation

The location of the hardscape in the Gala Garden above a parking garage brought additional challenges to the design team.

For one, the fixtures chosen are designed to be installed in-grade as opposed to through-grade. In other words, the light bases, wiring and control unit are visible in the ceiling of the parking structure with other utilities. A benefit of this design has been improved access for

Left: Kyllene Jones, Principal at Lighting Design Alliance, described how important the excellent work of the stonemasons and electrical contractors was in ensuring the fixtures matched grade and avoided seams. While matching the grade is always key for safety, the designers’ vision of children running from one light to another chasing the color change made it absolutely critical here. IMAGE COURTESY OF LIGHTING DESIGN ALLIANCE





Left: The Gala Garden is key among three courtyards, serving an additional entertainment purpose with the ability to set up a temporary stage. It's also the only courtyard with paver lights. These in turn had to be designed to interact with green walls featuring color changing LED pixel lights (upper left, with vegetation to grow in) and the torchiere elements in the foreground to create a falling petal effect. IMAGE COURTESY OF LIGHTWILD

maintenance, although the design team reports the installation has proven largely problem free.

However, the through-grade placement also created weatherproofing challenges that necessitated collaborating with the manufacturer to modify the hardware so as to alleviate them. Leakage into the parking structure was thereby avoided.

In addition, initial plans didn't account for steel structural beams in the garage's ceiling. Once the design team was made aware of these beams, the placement of the paver lights had to be adjusted while continuing to work with the paver intersections and spiral design.

Additional Space Benefits

The design team also feels the space has benefited from paver lights with a warming effect. This is particularly important considering there will be a time delay while vine plantings for the various green walls climb their framework.


Paver Light Tips

In closing, LASN asked the design team for advice intended for landscape architects struggling to integrate paver lights into a design. While the first recommendation was to consult with or hire a lighting designer, there were others.

A major point was coordination. Not only with the strengths and weaknesses of any designer involved, but also with manufacturers regarding things like mounting requirements and other key information. Every aspect of the installation must be designed and managed as one whole.

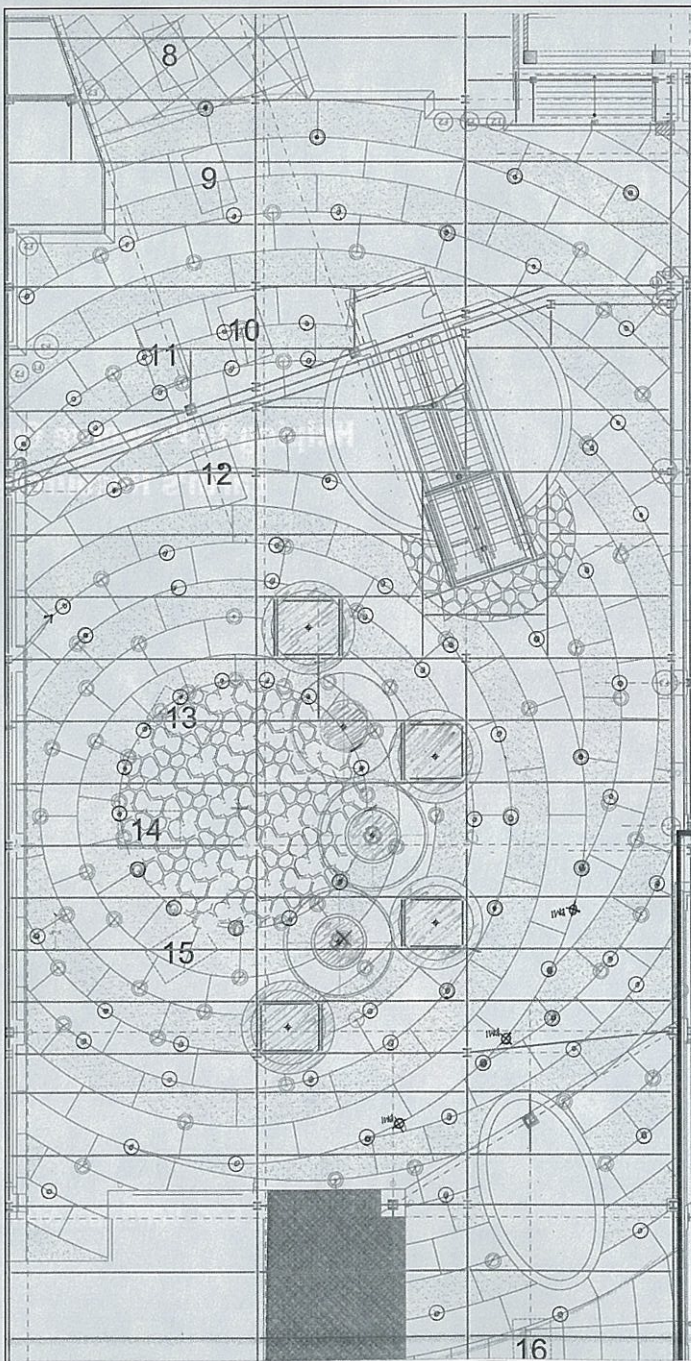
Another was the learning curve associated with paver lights capable of changing color. Lightshows can range from being pre-programmed from the factory to modifiable on site via a control panel.

In the case of the Gala Garden, the client desired a system they could "set and forget". As a result, the manufacturer creates any new programs in-house on a memory card before sending them to the maintenance team. They in turn load the card into the "monster brain" located in the garage and are done.

A final point was to make sure installers get the pertinent information to make the design a reality. On this project, Lighting Design Alliance attached any helpful installation instructions from the manufacturer to the fixture cut sheets. 

Left: A major design challenge associated with the hardscape was the "subgrade" involved: a parking garage. This necessitated a through-grade installation for the luminaries, with the light tile bases, control unit and wiring visible in the parking garage ceiling amid other utilities. When structural beams (the grid overlaying the courtyard) unknown during the initial design presented themselves, the light positions had to be adjusted to avoid compromising the structural members.

IMAGE COURTESY OF LIGHTING DESIGN ALLIANCE



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